

18 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Support Services Staff

SUBJECT : Presidential Libraries Planning

1. Summary -- There has been no directive from the White House concerning the requirements for the President Nixon Library or the criteria for Agency contributions. Officials at National Archives have tried in vain to stimulate an announcement and currently feel that none will be forthcoming before the Fall 1971.

Discussions with Officials at National Archives and six Agencies find that Agencies remain alert for an action call, but most do not have an active plan or staff collecting material.

The AEC and Departments of Agriculture and Commerce do have positive plans and programs for the continuing identification, filming, and holding of documents for the Presidential Library call. Others contacted, with negative results, were: Department of State, Army, and Navy. Calls to DIA, NSA, and AID were not returned as yet.

2. National Archives -- Dr. Rhoads, the Archivist, and his Deputy Dr. Campbell, talked with me in his office on Tuesday. The problem of Presidential Libraries was one topic covered. They feel a continuing program is desirable but impossible within today's personnel ceilings. They have Mr. John Nesbitt assigned as Archivist to the President in the Executive Office Building. He has tried to promote an announcement but has had no success. Dr. Rhoads felt the responsibility to remain alert to the periodic call has been well served by the Agency Records Management Programs. He feels the Agency Historians and Archivist could serve as the committee to gather the material for the Libraries.

In a meeting on Wednesday, I talked with Dr. Frank Evans, National Archives representative on the President Johnson Library. He said the criteria are changed by each President and Frank could not see how a continuing campaign could operate without some wasted effort. He said that there is no legal requirement for continuing programs and President Johnson's suggestion can not be considered legally binding. He mentioned that the Nixon Library is currently debating a new site, because Whittier does not have a large enough graduate program to support a large Presidential Library.

In the National Archives Presidential Libraries Staff on Thursday, Mrs. Livingston said they are without firm guidance or plans for action. Dr. Reed, in charge, said he hopes to stir up something soon with another paper, but he does not look for action until the Fall.

3. Atomic Energy Commission -- The AEC has a Secretariate of some 50 or 60 people which maintains the Commission's documents and files. The AEC Historian, Dr. Richard Hewlett (119-5431) in the Secretariate has a woman identify and index the records, that would be of interest to the next Presidential Library, as they come through. The Chief, Records Services Branch then sees to it that the documents are microfilmed and held until required.

The AEC Headquarters Records Officer, Larry Neudorfer (119-4516) is most familiar with this operation. Only top level material is considered appropriate for selection. No field material is included. The AEC feels it is better to have a continuing program than a "crash" reaction. They feel the AEC has a firm understanding of the type material that is regularly required of them. Larry told me on Thursday that the woman who was doing the analysis retired recently and he is not certain who has picked up this responsibility. He feels it will be continued.

4. Department of Agriculture -- Here too the Secretariate is responsible for a continuing program to identify material and to advise the Secretary of Agriculture of his role with the Presidential Library. Jim Austin (111-5564) heads the Secretary's Records Unit in the Secretariate. On Thursday he told me that there is no Directive for their small continuing program, but that they do operate on two features:

- a. Copies of certain official papers are regularly set aside for the Presidential Library. This is built right in to the Records Program and reports distribution.
- b. Jim Austin is responsible to advise each new Secretary of the Presidential Library Program and the fact that there will be a call for the Secretary's papers. Most Secretaries have honored that call. Although Secretary Freeman had an agreement with the Minnesota Historical Society, he did contribute some papers to the Johnson Library.

The notification from the White House comes to the Secretariate which is kept familiar with the requirement and is prepared to attach a note to the announcement telling the Secretary that the Department has a Program and a collection. The Secretary then appoints a top official and the contribution is pulled together.

The call does not go below Cabinet level. (Johnson did ask for some sub-cabinet contributions.) The agency material is not sent out. The central file is kept. During the "crash" call certain additional projects or files are identified as appropriate and copies are added to the contribution.

5. Department of Commerce -- This Department waits for the "crash" call before it starts the contribution collection, but it too has a

Secretariate which simplifies the anticipated requirement. Mrs Ivy Parr on the Records Officer's Staff (Bob Jordon, 189-3743) tells me she can complete the collection from the Executive Secretariate in a few days. The Secretariate handles all the VIP correspondence and committee reports and mail. They keep a copy on file. Other Secretariates in other Bureaus are equally cooperative.

The Department of Commerce does not have personnel enough to have a continuing program. They circulate the announcement to the Secretariate and pick up the contribution one time.

6. Department of Navy -- They have no formal program for collecting material for Presidential Libraries. Records Officer William Kincaid (11-67545) said they take no initiative for such a program. They respond when the call comes in. He agrees with the advisability of a continuing program but has not heard of anyone doing it. He said they do have an active Naval History Program.

7. Department of Army -- I met with Col. Pomrenze, AGS, on Tuesday. He said the Records Staff does not have a continuing program for the Presidential Libraries. More than ninety percent of the Army records are retired within two years and are in National Archives custody. He sees no reason for any of it to be moved from one branch of National Archives (Records Centers) to another branch (Presidential Libraries). Both are equally available to researchers. If any transfer is done the Archives not the Army will have to do it. The special arrangements made by the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are not known.

8. Department of State -- On Thursday I talked with Mr. Don Simon and he said he had studied the problem of a continuing program for Presidential Library support but they do not have one. They took no action because succeeding Presidents change the guidelines for State Department requirements. President Johnson differed drastically from Kennedy and Kennedy differed from the others.

Don said that State spent a lot of time and money on films and files for President Johnson and they came back with more requests. State has doubled the original effort and at a higher level. They are now waiting for reaction.

State keeps in Switzerland the citizen letters they get from the White House for action. They eventually turn this public correspondence over to the Presidential Libraries.

Don feels they would establish a Program if they knew what was wanted. They would prefer not to work on a "crash" basis. They do not want to put manpower on a project that may be reversed when the announcement comes out. The White House has not yet issued State any guidelines.

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